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8. COLONIALISM IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

'Perhaps there is no other continent in the world where colonialism showed its face in such a cruel and brutal form as it did in Africa. Under colonialism the people of Africa suffered immensely. They were humiliated, persecuted, tortured and deprived of their rights and civil liberties. Above all, they were not treated as human beings. The invaluable economic resources of the continent were mercilessly exploited by the colonial powers to strengthen their own economies. Had the consequences of colonialism in Africa been confined only to the colonial period, the matter would have remained buried in the annals of history, and would have been of interest perhaps to the historians. Unfortunately, this is not the case, since the impact of colonialism continues to be felt by the whole continent much after the dawn of independence, and will probably continue to be felt for decades to come... The roots of most of the problems being faced today by African countries, such as border disputes, domestic turmoil and instability, refugee problem, food shortage, and slow pace of economic development may be traced to the colonial period' (Saxena, 1993: 1).

Formal European colonialism lasted in most of the Horn of Africa for less than a hundred years. In the long history of a people and a region, this is a brief span. However, this is not to say that it had no impact and significance. Thus, in this chapter two important sets of questions will be addressed. First, what legacies has colonialism left or what impact did it make on the region? Second, what is the significance of colonialism for the Horn of Africa? Was it a major break with the past of the people and the region, or was it a mere passing event that did not constitute a break in the long history of the region? In short, what is the place of the colonial era within the wider context of the Horn of African history? Before addressing these questions, however, it will be important to briefly consider the ideological, socio-political and economic doctrines, which were the driving forces behind European colonial expansion in Africa. This will help us understand why certain policies were preferred and specific measures were taken by the different colonial powers. Then how the different communities and various colonial states were (re)constituted will be discussed. Together with this the policies of the different colonial powers, the political structures they created, and the patterns of decolonization of the region will be considered.

8.1 The Role of Ideological and Political Discourse in the European Colonial Expansion

It is crucial to point out from the outset that changes in European economic conditions in the later half of the 1880's contributed to empire building and colonial expansion largely in order to safeguard overseas sources of raw material and cheap labour, and establish safe and profitable havens for the export of European goods and capital. Thus, colonial ideology and political discourses are reflections of and justification for the European colonial expansion. Analyzing the ideological orientation and political discourse of colonialism can, therefore, be helpful for deeper understanding.

Colonialism as the Oxford English Dictionary describes it is: 'a settlement in a new country ... a body of people who settle in a new locality, forming a community subject to or connected with their parent
state; the community so formed, consisting of the original settlers and their descendants and successors, as long as the connection with the parent state is kept up (Cited in Loomba, 1998: 1). This definition remarkably avoids any reference to people other than the colonizers and of any implication of encounter between peoples. In reality, however, the process of forming a community in a new land necessarily meant unforming or re-forming the existing communities. The reforming process involved a wide range of practices including trade, plunder, negotiation, warfare, genocide, enslavement and rebellions (Ibid.: 2). Therefore, colonialism can best be defined as the conquest and control of other people, their land and goods. This process involved a variety of techniques and patterns of domination, which produced the economic imbalance that was necessary for the growth of European capitalism and industry. One could say that colonialism assisted the growth of European capitalism.

Colonial expansion involved much repression and coercion, and is thus sometimes taken as a process that did not involve the consent of the colonized. However, colonial rulers achieved domination by creating partial consent and/or involving the colonized peoples in creating the states and regimes which oppressed them. Furthermore, as Loomba (Ibid.: 57) notes:

Colonialism reshaped existing structures of human knowledge. No branch of learning was left untouched by the colonial experience. The process was somewhat like the functioning of ideology itself, simultaneously a misrepresentation of reality and its reordering. ... A crucial aspect of this process was gathering and ordering of information about the lands and peoples visited by, and later subject to, the colonial powers.¹

The definition of civilization and backwardness rests on the production of an irreconcilable difference between black and white, self and other. It also rests on the production of the image of the other, as it is very different from the self. For instance, according to Loomba (Ibid.: 57-58), 'the late medieval European figure of the ‘wild man’ who lived in the forest, on the outer edges of civilization, was hairy, nude, violent, lacking in moral sense and excessively sensual, expressed all manner of cultural anxieties'. In the specific case of Africa, for instance, European views of Negro Africa were originally formed during the slave trade. As Chamberlain (1974: 19) puts it, for supporters of the slave trade, 'the Negro was not fully human, or was such a degenerated form of humanity that slavery was a desirable condition for him'. These images about the other were (re)moulded through various histories of contact. Colonialism expanded the contact between Europeans and non-Europeans, generating a flood of images and ideas on an unprecedented scale. Thus, it was perhaps crucial for the affirmation and reconstruction of the different images.

The construction and the expansion of such images created colonial stereotypes about Europe and its others which perpetuate an artificial difference between self and other (Loomba, 1998: 59-60), the self (Europeans) being superior to the other (non-Europeans). This in turn resulted in racism. In this process science played an important role. Far from being objective and ideology-free, Western science was deeply implicated in the construction of a racist way of thinking about human beings and the differences between them. For instance, 'scientific discourse suggested that

¹ The colonial production of knowledge was not a simple process. It necessarily included a clash with and marginalisation of the knowledge and belief systems of those who were conquered. At a very practical level, colonialists were dependent upon natives for their access to the ‘new’ lands and their secrets' (Loomba, 1998: 66-67).

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since the skin colour of specific races did not change when their members moved to a new location, ..., therefore it was a biological and natural difference. Thus races now seen to be the expression of biological (and therefore immutable) hierarchy. Over time, colour, hair type, skill shape and size, facial angles, or brain size were variously taken up by scientific discourses as the most accurate index of racial differences' (Ibid.: 63). Race also explained people's civilizational and cultural attributes. It is, therefore, justified for Europeans (a superior and civilized race) to colonize and dominate non-Europeans (inferior and uncivilized races).

Ideology has also been a driving force for colonial expansion. Colonial powers legitimated their domination and plunder of their colonial subjects, as being a civilizational mission and they used every means available to make colonial subjects accept colonialism as such. Thus, colonial ideology served to obscure from the colonized people the real state of their own lives, their exploitation and oppression. Ideology had also played a crucial role in creating consent; it was the medium through which certain ideas were transmitted and more importantly, held to be true.2

Colonial discourse had been another important driving force for creating and maintaining colonial rule. Discourse here is taken as a whole field or domain within which language is used in particular ways. This domain is rooted in human practices, institutions and actions. What discursive practices do is make it difficult for individuals to think outside of them (Loomba, 1998: 39). In addition, discourse (in this case colonial discourse) forced human beings (again in this case the colonized people) to internalize the systems of repression and reproduce them by confirming to certain ideas of what is normal and what is deviant. Thus, it was also an attack on the culture, ideas and value system of the colonized.

Colonial discourse was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted a binary opposition between the familiar (Europe, the West, 'us') and the strange (for instance, the Africans, 'them'). This opposition has been crucial to European self-conception: if colonized people are irrational, Europeans are rational; if the former are barbaric, and lazy, Europe is civilized, with hard working ethics; if Africa is seen as a static, Europe can be seen as developing and marching ahead (Ibid.: 47). In some extreme cases, as H. H. Johnston did, people held that the Negro had only himself to blame for his condition. Johnston (quoted in Chamberlain 1974: 106) wrote, 'the White and Yellow peoples have been the unconscious agents of the power behind nature in punishing the Negro for his lazy backwardness... the races that will not work persistently and doggedly are trampled on, and in time displaced, by those who do'. Such discourses have been crucial in the legitimization of first the slave trade and later on colonial rule over the 'other'. Accordingly, therefore, colonial rule over the irrational, barbaric, lazy, static, etc. Africans by the rational, civilized, hard working, developing Europeans was justified.

Ideology and discourse alone cannot explain the motives and impulses behind colonial expansion. In this regard, historians and other scholars have devoted considerable time and effort to understanding the primary motives of European colonial rule and have come up with

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2 Ideology to achieve this objective uses different institutions such as schools, the church, the family, media and political system. These institutions assist the reproduction of the dominant system by creating subjects who are ideologically conditioned to accept the values of the system.
details, however, one can argue:

In most instances of formal colonialism both economic (trade, the domestic socioeconomic climate,
and overseas investment, production, and development prospects) and what might be termed 'state
politics' (global strategy, military power, nationalism, international standing, and domestic politics)
interacted as traders, producers, financiers, prospectors, and speculators combined with military
officers, colonial officials, missionaries, politicians to shape key events and conditions (Cook, 1996:
22-23).

Thus, inasmuch as state-political and economic considerations were joined in actuality, it
makes no sense to divorce these considerations in theory. In short, colonialism was the result
of a combination of different factors and processes.

8.2. The Scramble for Africa and the Creation of Colonial Entities in the Horn of Africa

The metaphor 'scramble for Africa' suggests that rapid and confused activity and, a rush forward,
a sort of treasure hunt. This metaphor, therefore, not only tends to describe vividly, it also tends
to assign values to the historical action itself. The popular conclusion had long been that the
opening up of Africa in the nineteenth century was done with haste as European explorers,
missionaries, and military men brought European politics, culture, and confusion to a hitherto
largely terra incognita. 'The Dark Continent, it would appear, was suddenly suffused with light'
(Betts, 1966: VII). Whether 'scramble' can be a good description of what happened in Africa
between 1880s and 1914, the partition was actually the most important political development of
the European colonial phase of African history. It was a development which had wider significa-
cance in suggesting the future lines of African political and social patterns.

What triggered this dramatic phase? As Cook (1996: 9) explains, the 'unprecedented and
unrelated combination of events: France's invasion of Tunisia (1881), British occupation of Egypt (1882),
Belgium's King Leopold's offensive in the Congo (early 1880s); and Germany's sudden taking of
Cameroon, Southwest Africa, Tanganyika, and Togoland (1884-1885)' triggered the scramble. The
cumulative result of these developments was heightened tension and a surge of reactive and
preemptive colonization. Moreover, between November 1884 and February 1885 the West
African conference was held in Berlin to address the problem raised by this initial round of
occupying territories. The Conference was attended by delegations of fourteen countries

1 Mackenzie (1983: 44) also rejected the mono-causal theories on the scramble for Africa. Rather he argues that 'the
scramble for Africa seems to have emerged from a combination of exaggerated hope and over-heated anxiety'.

4 For instance, from the outset the Italian attempt to colonize Ethiopia can be seen as if national pride, domestic
anxieties, and the great power ambitions of its leaders had mainly propelled it. But the imagined ample commercial
potential and the possibility of settlement for 300,000 peasants who would help relieve population pressures had been
contributing factors. And in any event, Eritrea was only a stepping-stone to a North African empire where prestige and
profit supposedly awaited Italy. The British occupation of India, Egypt, Sudan, Uganda and Kenya can also be another
example. It seems as if in the British occupation of India everything could be attributed to strategy. The British
occupation of Egypt was based on the presumption that the Suez Canal was the lifeline to India. Therefore, Egypt must
be held and the Nile secured to its sources by controlling the region stretching from Egypt to Sudan, Uganda, and
Kenya. But economic considerations were just as important as strategic ones for safeguarding India. After all, India's
unrivaled importance derived largely from trade and from revenues that covered the costs of British rule as well as
from Indian troops that fought in numerous imperial locales (Cook, 1996: 24)

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including the United States. This Conference 'set the ground rules for European colonization by establishing the doctrine of effective occupation: to receive international recognition of a claim to a territory, effective occupation had to be demonstrated. With this doctrine delegates hoped to end the indiscriminate practice of simply asserting a 'degree of influence' over a large interior space by establishing a toehold in adjoining coastal strip' (Ibid.). However, the real partition of Africa did not result from the Conference but from a series of bilateral agreements between 1884 and 1890, and an incremental occupation of the different parts of the continent.

In this process of the scramble for Africa the Horn of Africa was partitioned among Britain, Italy, and France. The British occupied Sudan and part of Somalia; Italy occupied part of Ethiopia and created Eritrea as a colonial entity, and it also occupied part of Somalia; and France occupied Djibouti. As a result, the Horn of Africa was divided into five colonial territories (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Eritrea and French, Italian and British Somalilands), and independent Ethiopia (except for five years of Italian occupation). At the end of the partition the political map of the region was completely changed. It is important to briefly consider the historical development of the partition and the creation of the different colonial territories.

8.2.1. Italy in Ethiopia and the Creation of Eritrea as a Colonial Entity

Italy’s presence in the Horn of Africa began in 1869 when an Italian Lazarist missionary, Giuseppe Sapeto, purchased the Red Sea port of Assab from a local sultan for 6000 Maria Theresa dollars. The port became the property of a private Italian shipping company, the Societa Rubattino, and in 1882 it was declared an Italian colony (Akpan, 1985: 265, see also Cook, 1996: 16-17). During this time much of the Red Sea Coast and the Gulf of Aden, and their immediate hinterlands, including Massawa and the city of Harar were under the rule of the Ethiopian emperor, Yohannes IV. On the other hand, Egypt under the British occupation in 1882 was faced with the rebellion of the Sudanese Mahdi, which caused Britain to decide in 1883 that Sudan would have to be evacuated of Egyptian and British troops. Since several Sudanese towns with Egyptian garrisons and European inhabitants were besieged by the Mahdists, the British needed Yohannes’s help in their evacuation (Akpan, 1985: 267). A British officer, Rear-Admiral Sir William Hewett, was dispatched to negotiate with Yohannes. A treaty was signed on 3 June 1884 between Hewett of Britain and Yohannes. In this treaty Yohannes agreed to assist in the evacuation in return for getting back the lost territories in the northern part of Ethiopia (now part of Eritrea) and the free port of Massawa. Yohannes played his part (the notable Ethiopian warrior Ras Alula relieved six garrisons in the Sudan) but the British did not. Instead, the British passed Massawa over to Italy in 1885 (this is typical European betrayal and deceit). They did so in the hope of curbing the expansion of France, the principal rival in the scramble for Africa. Afterwards Italy used Massawa as a springboard to control the whole of Eritrea and Ethiopia at large.

5 The Italian officer in charge of the occupation, Rear-Admiral Caimi, proclaimed that 'no obstacle shall be put by me on your trade; on the contrary, all my exertions shall aim at facilitating it'" (Akpan, 1985: 267). However, this was soon proved worthless when Italy stopped the supply of arms to Yohannes, and started penetrating inland to the highlands of Ethiopia.
When the Italians started penetrating inland they met with strong resistance. In 1887 a small Italian contingent (500 men) was surprised and destroyed at Dogali in the then northern Ethiopian province of Bhir Bedir (the current Eritrea) by a large, well-equipped force under Ras Alula (Cook, 1996: 16-17). After this incident the British tried to mediate. A British diplomat, Sir Gerald Portal, was dispatched to the Ethiopian Emperor to ask him to agree to an Italian occupation of part of the northern part of Ethiopia, which Egyptians had ceded in 1884 (Akpan, 1985: 267). Emperor Yohannes’s answer was ‘I can do nothing with all this. By the Treaty made by Admiral Hewett, all the country evacuated by the Egyptians on my frontier was ceded to me at the instigation of England, now you came to ask me to give it up again’ (Ibid.: 267-268).

While expanding into the hinterland of northern Ethiopia from Massawa Italy established friendly relation with Menelik to create a strong alliance against Emperor Yohannes. The friendship between Menelik and Italy culminated on 2 May 1889 - less than two months after the death of Yohannes - in a Treaty of Peace and Amity signed by both parties at the Ethiopian village of Wuchale (Ibid.). In this Treaty Menelik recognized Italian sovereignty over the greater part of the Eritrea plateau, including Asmara, while Italy recognized him as Emperor of Ethiopia and promised that he could import arms and ammunition through the Italian territory. The most important section of the Treaty was Article XVII that was soon in dispute. The quarrel arose from the fact that the treaty had two texts, one in Amharic and the other in Italian. The Amharic version stated that Menelik could avail himself of the services of the Italian authorities for all communications he might wish to have with other powers; the Italian text made this obligatory (Ibid.: 268-269).

The co-operation between Italy and Ethiopia was short lived, for on 11 October the Italian Foreign Minister Crispi announced that in conformity with Article XXXIV of the perpetual treaty between Italy and Ethiopia ... His majesty the king of Ethiopia consents to avail himself of the government of His majesty the king of Italy for the conduct of all matters which he may have with other powers of Governments’ (Quoted in Akpan, 1985: 269). This means that Italy claimed to a protectorate over Ethiopia and it was recognized by the European powers. When Menelik informed the European powers of his coronation as emperor, scheduled for 3 November 1889, they replied that since Ethiopia was a protectorate they could not deal with him directly, but only through Italy (Ibid.). In the meantime, Italians in support of their claim advanced from Eritrea into Tigray, in northern Ethiopia. They passed the limits earlier agreed to, crossed the Mareb River and occupied the town of Adwa in January 1890. On 27 September 1890 Menelik wrote to king Umberto I of Italy pointing out that he had discovered that the two texts of Article XVII did not agree. On 12 February 1893 Menelik finally denounced the Wuchale Treaty and on 27 February he informed the European powers (Ibid.; 270). After Italians started their expansion into the center of Ethiopia and Menelik denounced the Treaty, war was inevitable. Finally, the decisive battle was fought in March 1896 at Adwa. The Italians losing over 40 percent of their men fled to Eritrea, sued for peace, and revoked the protectorate (Cook, 1996:17).

As the result of Menelik’s victory, on 26 December 1896 the Italians agreed to the Peace Treaty of Addis Ababa which annulled the Treaty of Wuchale, and recognized the independence of

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* On the relation between Italy and Emperor Menelik refer back to the previous chapter.
Ethiopia (Akpan, 1985: 272). In addition, the boundary delimitation agreement between Ethiopia and the Italian colony of Eritrea was concluded and the southern frontier of the Italian colony was confirmed on the Mareb River (Zewde, 1991: 84). It is very important to note that as the result of this development Ethiopia lost Eritrea and the Red Sea coast and Italy maintained its colonial rule over this part of Ethiopia. It was this historical development which sowed the seed for one of the longest wars in Africa between Eritrean liberation fronts and the Ethiopian government after Eritrea was liberated and united with Ethiopia. It was this war which contributed to the crisis of the state of Ethiopia and produced a huge refugee population for over thirty years.

Two additional points are worth noting. First, after the battle of Adwa foreign intervention into the internal affairs of Ethiopia continued. Among other things, the Tripartite Treaty of 1906 which divided Ethiopia into British, French and Italian spheres of interest was an indication that European imperialist intervention would sooner or later recur in Ethiopia. Menelik’s death in 1913 and the events of the First World War spurred Italy in particular to revive her imperial designs against Ethiopia as of 1913. Thus between 1913 and 1919 the Italian Colonial Minister vigorously sponsored the implementation of its programme of Italian colonization in Africa (Akpan, 1985: 739). The changes in Fascist policy occurred in 1930 when Marchal De Bono, the Italian Minister of the Colonies, urged the Italian Council of Ministers to increase his budget for expansion beyond the confines of the Fatherland (Ibid.). In 1933 he held secret talks with Mussolini, at which he suggested the invasion of Ethiopia and Mussolini readily agreed (Ibid.: 740). On 3 October 1934 the Italian army crossed the Ethiopian frontier from Eritrea and another Italian force from Italian Somaliland also attacked from the south. On 6 May 1936 the Italian force occupied Addis Ababa. This was followed by five years of Italian Fascist occupation, during four of which the Ethiopian patriots were to fight alone.

Second, the empire that the Italians created after its occupation of Ethiopia came to be called, not Italian Ethiopia, but Italian East Africa (or Africa Orientale Italiana - AOI) which comprised Ethiopia, Eritrea and Italian Somaliland (Zewde, 1991: 162). The reconstituted Italian colonial empire had six major regional divisions: Eritrea (including Tigray); Amhara (including Begemdir, Wallo, Gogjam and Norther Shewa); Gala and Sidama (incorporating the southwestern and southern provinces); Addis Ababa (later changed to Shewa); Harar; and Somalia (including Ogaden) (Ibid.; Tripodi, 1999: 42). By dividing its colony mainly based on language, Italian colonialism introduced ethnic politics in this part of Africa. It is also interesting to note that the current ethnic federal arrangement of Ethiopian more or less replicated that of the Italian structure. Tigray, Amhara, Addis Ababa, Southern Ethiopia, Oromia, Harar, Somali (Ogaden) are some of the unit states within the current Federal Ethiopia.

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7 The determination of the imperialist powers to prevent any one of them gaining control of Ethiopia was crucial in the survival of Ethiopia as an independent state. Specially, Britain, France and Italy were not prepared to see any one of them in sole control of Ethiopia. Even though in 1906 they secretly signed a tripartite Convention in which Ethiopia was divided among them, this was not materialized for the same reason and because Menelik succeeded in playing Italy, France and Britain off against each other by signing separate agreements with each of them (Akpan, 1985: 278-279).

8 For the reactions of European powers and the measures taken by the League of Nations regarding the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, see Akpan, 1985: 742-743).
The Second World War and the Restoration of Ethiopian Independence

The Second World War, as far as Ethiopia was concerned, began on 3 October 1936, when Italy invaded the country from both north and south. After Italy occupied the Ethiopian capital, European powers recognized Italy's conquest of Ethiopia (for instance, Britain recognized the conquest in November 1938) even though there was patriotic resistance in every part of the country (Pankhurst, 1981: 120). In September 1939, the exiled Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia offered his services to the British government, but the British gave no reply to avoid offending Mussolini (Ibid.). The situation significantly changed when, in 10 June 1940, Mussolini decided to declare war on the United Kingdom and France (Ibid.). British from Sudan and French from Djibouti started encouraging the anti-Italian patriots in Ethiopia. However, the British were reluctant to accord the Ethiopian government any recognition. It was the pressure of military events, and in particular the fear that the Italians would advance into the Sudan and Kenya which nevertheless necessitated some accommodation with the Ethiopian monarch. As a result, the Emperor was allowed to go to Sudan on 25 June and on 21 August a small Anglo-Ethiopian mission led by a British officer, Brigadier Sandford, entered Ethiopia (Ibid.: 120-121).

Two months later, in October, a British ministerial conference held in Khartoum decided that the emperor would be allowed to receive small arms and that Ethiopians fighting against the Italians should be termed 'patriots', and no longer rebels against Italian rule. However, a request by the Emperor for a formal alliance between the United Kingdom and Ethiopia was rejected (Ibid.). Later on, another British officer, Colonel Wingate, was sent to support the Ethiopian patriots.

However, the British government was not interested in any real restoration of Ethiopian independence and the restoration of pre-war Ethiopia as a sovereign state. This was clearly reflected in the 9 December memorandum of the British Foreign Office, which stated: it is difficult to believe that the restoration of the former Ethiopian Empire as an independent state is a practical one. The Empire survived as long as it did only because the three great powers bordering on it - Great Britain, France and Italy - were unable to agree on its control' (Quoted in Pankhurst, 1981: 122). According to the same memorandum, the British policy was 'the restoration of the ex-emperor as a ruler of a native African state under European protection' (Ibid.). There was also an attempt to establish a separate Oromo state somehow affiliated to the British and/or an East African federation - under British colonial control - which would include a large slice of land from southern Ethiopia.

In the meantime, the Liberation Campaign of the allied forces started in January 1941 from Sudan and Kenya, and the Emperor entered into Ethiopia also from Sudan (Ibid.: 123). Even then the British government was not interested in restoring Ethiopian independence. This was clearly demonstrated in the 9 December memorandum, which pointed out that:

The effect of the outbreak of the war was not to terminate Italian sovereignty over Abyssinia, which still exists in law, nor to turn the country automatically into an independent sovereign state; what has happened is that we are free from any obligation not to disturb the existing legal position and have our

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9 The historical description in the next few pages is mainly based on Pankhurst's work (Pankhurst, 1981).
hands free to make such settlement of the future of Abyssinia as we may think fit and may be in a position to effect (Quoted in Pankhurst, 1981: 122).

However, on 4 February the British foreign secretary, Anthony Eden, for the first time recognized the principle of Ethiopian independence when he declared: 'his Majesty's Government would welcome the reappearance of an independent Ethiopian state and recognize the claim of the Emperor Haile Selassie to the throne.' (Quoted in Pankhurst, 1981: 123). The successes of the Ethiopian patriots and the resultant disintegration of Italian morale enabled the Ethiopians to advance at a much more rapid rate than the British had anticipated or desired. What happened next is very interesting and clearly shows the colonial mentality and the attitude towards the African people. When Wingate, the British officer, requested the support of the Royal Air Force in order to crush the Italian forces as quickly as possible, the support was denied. The British were not happy with the idea that the Ethiopian patriots would take over their capital city by themselves. The following quotation is a clear illustration.

Who was to capture Addis Ababa. ... The Kaid, Khartoum, and the forces at Keren could never get there in time. But what about Wingate and Gideon Force - the Patriot Army with the Emperor himself as its titular commander? 'My dear fellow', said the officials in the Sudan, 'can you imagine what such a thing might mean? If the habashis are allowed to take over their capital for themselves, they will not only rape and riot, but they will never be the same again. ... Keep them back, for heaven's sake, keep them back. (Quoted in Pankhurst, 1981: 124).

As a result, the South African troops entered Addis Ababa while the Ethiopian patriots and the Emperor were forced to remain where they were. The request for a plane to be sent so that Haile Selassie could be flown to his capital was refused. The reason given by the British was that 'there are 5,000 Italians in Addis Ababa. White people. If the emperor arrives, the natives will panic. They will go wild and start looting and raping, and the Italians will be killed. So keep the little man out.' (Ibid.: 125). The Emperor, however, decided to march to Addis Ababa in the face of British disapproval and entered the capital on 5 May.

The country, however, came under the control of British military rule. In other words, in 1941-42 Ethiopia, far from being restored to its former rulers, was placed unilaterally under an Occupied Enemy Territory Administration (OETA) administered from Nairobi (Ibid.: 125). However, after protracted negotiations between the British and the Ethiopian emperor, a two-year agreement recognizing Ethiopian independence was signed on 31 January 1942. Besides this unequal treaty the Emperor was obliged to sign a military convention with the United Kingdom. The most important article of this agreement was Article 5 of the military convention which

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10 The Foreign Secretary also made clear in the same statement that '...the conduct of military operations by Imperial forces in parts of Abyssinia will require temporary measures of military control. These will be carried out in consultation with the Emperor, and will be brought to an end as soon as the situation permits.' (Quoted in Pankhurst, 1981: 123).
11 The term 'habashis' refers to Ethiopians.
12 For the date indicated in this paragraph refer Pankhurst, 1981: 125-132.
13 For the various articles of this agreement which legitimized a very substantial degree of British control, see Pankhurst, 1981: 127-128.
further laid down that 'the territory of Ogaden', which had been included in the Italian colony of Somali in 1936, should 'remain under the British Administration of Somalia' (ibid.: 128). Later on, another treaty was signed on 19 December 1944, which resulted in the decolonization of the greater part of Ethiopia, except for the Ogaden and the Reserved Area, which remained under British military administration. However, the British government agreed, by the protocol signed with the Ethiopian government on 24 July 1948, to withdraw from the greater part of Ogaden, which was thus restored to Ethiopia jurisdiction. Finally, as the result of the Anglo-Ethiopian agreement of 29 November 1954, the Ethiopian government resumed jurisdiction and administration of, in and over the Reserved Area and Ogaden. In general, the process of decolonization of Ethiopia and the restoration of the pre-1935 frontier had taken one and half decades.

Another important issue, which should be considered here, would be the question of Eritrea. As it is indicated elsewhere in this chapter, Eritrea became an Italian colony in 1890. From the time of the conclusion of the liberation campaign, Ethiopia had put forward its claim not only on Ogaden but also on Eritrea. The Paris Conference in 1946, which concluded World War II, while it forced Italy to renounce its colonies, had postponed the question of their disposal (Zewde, 1991: 182). However, as was the case with Italian Somaliland, the British ruled Eritrea under the UN mandate for almost 10 years. For the future of the territory was not clear, it became a fertile ground for the growth of competing political groups, mainly pro-unionist and pro-independence. 14

The four powers (Britain, France, the Soviet Union and the United States) unable to solve the Eritrean question finally passed it on to the United Nations in 1948. 15 The UN appointed a Commission of five men to ascertain the wishes of the Eritrean people. 16 Members of the Commission could not reach a unanimous recommendation. 17 Finally, the UN Resolution 390 V, adopted on 2 December 1950, endorsed the federation formula as the best solution (ibid.). 18 As a result, in 1952 Eritrea was federated to Ethiopia. Ten years later the federation was dissolved and Eritrea became the fourteenth province of Ethiopia. The decision to abolish the federal arrange-

14 According to Zewde (1991: 182), the demands were polarized into union with Ethiopia versus independence. The Unionist (supported by Ethiopia) constituted the single largest political group in Eritrea. The Independence Bloc, as it was known, was a conglomerate of different groups united by their opposition to union. It mainly included the Muslim League, the Liberal Progressive Party (supported by Britain) and a group of Italian settlers, ex-askaris and people of mixed race (supported by Italy).

15 For a detailed historical account of the activities of the four powers with regard to Eritrea, see Reta, 1999:

16 For the policies of the four powers, as reflected in the UN meeting to decide the future of Eritrea, Libya and Somalia, see Reta, 1999: 97-102 and 106-107.

17 Members of the Commission were from Burma, Guatemala, Norway, Pakistan and South Africa (Zewde, 1991: 183).

18 Guatemala (representing the strong pro-Italian Latin American lobby) and Pakistan (championing the Muslim cause) recommended independence. South Africa and Burma recommended federation, while Norway was for union (Zewde, 1991: 183).

19 It is important to note that two major factors contributed to the adoption of the federation formula. First, in the hope of securing the Ogaden, Britain modified her earlier stand on Eritrea and had come to support Ethiopia's claim over Eritrea (Reta, 1999: 93). Second, the United States supported the federation because of the safety of the communication base they had inherited from Italy. The Americans supported 'the federal arrangement, trusting to Ethiopia rather than to an independent Eritrea, which was an unknown quantity' (Zewde, 1991: 183).
ment proved to be far more costly. It became the beginning of one of the longest wars in independent Africa (this issue will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter).

From the discussion above, one can conclude that colonialism changed the political landscape of Ethiopia. Even though the colonial structure was changed when Eritrea was united with the rest of Ethiopia, the separation of Eritrea since 1991 shows how difficult it is to unmake the colonial structure. It is also possible to trace back the root causes of, among other things, the two major problem areas in Ethiopian politics: the Eritrean and the Ogaden questions, to colonialism. In addition, the introduction of ethnicity by Italian colonialism had a long-lasting effect, a problem that is not yet solved. Moreover, the weakening of the historically important long-distance trade between central and southern Ethiopia and the Somali coast and between western Ethiopia and Sudan significantly affected the economic development of the region.

8.2.2. British Colonialism and the Establishment of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan

The creation of a British-ruled state in Sudan was not the country's first experience of statehood (centralized state) within roughly those borders. The Turco-Egyptian rulers, after their invasion in 1820, had carved out approximately the same area to govern. Later on, the Mahdist movement defeated the Turco-Egyptian rulers and the Mahdist state was established until the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium replaced it.

The initial attraction, the opening of the Suez Canal and the importance of the Red Sea, resulted in the Anglo-French involvement in the domestic affairs of Egypt, which culminated in the British occupation of Egypt in 1882 (Woodward, 1990: 13). Britain's continuing occupation of Egypt made Sudan of concern to her. However, for many years there was no attempt to conquer Sudan. When finally the Anglo-Egyptian conquest did take place it happened for reasons that owed as much to the changing character of international politics as to developments within Sudan. The ongoing scramble for Africa and the European rivalry directly contributed to the British decision to advance up to the Nile. The Fashoda incident between Britain and France is a very good example of the competition of European powers in Sudan (Okoth, 1996: 200, Ruay, 1994: 31). The tension was the outcome of the policies of both Britain and France, in which the British planned to establish 'an all-British route from Cape to Cairo' while the French planned 'for an all-French route from West to East, from Senegal to the Red Sea' (Chamberlain, 1974: 84; Ruay, 1994: 30). The confrontation of Britain and France brought the tensest moment in the scramble for the continent and even talk of war in Europe (Woodward, 1990: 14). However, France backed down and signed an agreement with Britain in March 1899, which left Britain in control of Sudan (Chamberlain, 1974: 85; Okoth, 1996: 200). After Sudan came under the effective control of both Egyptian and British military rule, a hitherto unknown form of government was created: condominium rule.20 The Anglo-Egyptian 'Agreement for the Administration on the Sudan', as the basis of this type of government, was signed and came into

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effect on January 19, 1899 (Ruay, 1994:34; Chamberlain, 1974: 85). The Agreement vested wide authority in a British Governor-General who was to be appointed by the Khedive (the Egyptian ruler), on the advice of Britain (El Mahdi, 1865: 121).

The British foresaw that their direct involvement in the administration of Egypt would one day disappear, and that this would necessitate a strengthening of the British position in Sudan and a weakening of Egyptian influence. The major implications of both these ideas, according to Woodward (1990: 17), were to strengthen the autonomy of the Sudan government. But successive British ministers were reluctant to annex Sudan because they felt such a move could worsen relations with Egypt and create additional responsibility and possible expense. However, in the end it was not ministers or diplomats but a soldier, Allenby, who settled the outcome. As a result, in the granting of independence to Egypt in 1922, Sudan was specially excluded from the Egyptian state. The interesting point here is:

The situation thus appeared to have turned right round from the establishment of the condominium. Then Britain’s strength in Egypt had allowed Sudan to be added by conquest; but now, as her position in Egypt had been weakened by nationalist revolt, Sudan became in effect not a condominium in any actual sense (with the departure of the subordinate Egyptian official and the Egyptian troops) but instead a semiautonomous British-ruled state whose international position was more, not less, ambiguous as the result of the ‘independence’ granted to Egypt (Ibid.: 18).

The British adopted more or less the Turco-Egyptian model of government. At the top stood the governor general who had the powers to promulgate laws and ordinances as required (El Mahdi, 1965: 212-122). The legal system in Sudan was as hybrid as the Condominium Agreement itself. It was based on the codes used by the British in India but employed Egyptian procedures.

It is important to note that there was continuous resistance against the foreign domination throughout Sudan. Therefore, in addition to the overcoming of the continuing resistance, the Sudan government had to seek cooperation amongst the people who were well used to government. This had been at the core of British policy. Ethnic policy was one important aspect of the British policy in Sudan. With only a handful of British officials it was natural to use an indigenous social structure. Thus, the British rulers used ethnic hierarchies - nazirs, omdas and shaykhs - which the Turco-Egyptian rulers formalized and institutionalized earlier. The British by doing so encouraged a sense of tribal identification and gave formal recognition to this social structure. Religious accommodation was the other aspect of British policy. Recognizing the

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21 According to Ruay (1994: 34-35), the condominium rule was the architect of modern Sudan with its present international boundaries. Before this Agreement there was no Sudan in the shape we have it today as a territorial and political entity.

22 The personal affairs of Muslims were dealt with by qadis (appointed religious officials) according to the Sharia; and recognized chiefs dispensed customary law where possible. However, much of the day-to-day administration of the civil codes was conducted by government officials acting as magistrates.

23 The Dinka offered the greatest resistance until their last major uprising was put down in 1927. The Nuer people also fiercely resisted the imposition of colonial rule to the extent the Royal Air Force (RAF) bombers had to be used to suppress the revolt as late as 1928. In Southern Sudan the Shilluk and the Azande offered similar resistance. The official response was violent which included confiscation of cattle and burning of huts. However, the British response in northern Sudan was not as violent as it was in the south. This was mainly because Mahdisim was considered too deep-rooted to be destroyed initially and, hence containment was judged more appropriate than any attempt at eradication (Woodward, 1990: 26-27).

24 In this hierarchy the nazirs, the paramount chief was overseeing omdas, and omdas overseeing the shaykhs.
political and ideological power of Islam, which was demonstrated in the Mahdist movement, the British rulers preferred to erect an acceptable body of Islam, the ulemma rather than repress Islam. The necessity to treat Islam with sensitivity included preventing Christian conversion in northern Sudan, and encouraging missionaries to concentrate instead on the mainly animist societies of the south (Woodward, 1990: 33). Another aspect of the British policy was the reintroduction of Sudan into the world economy by encouraging trade and commerce. However, the impact of these developments should not be exaggerated. As Woodward (Ibid.: 39) puts it, '...The state was being built from the centre outwards, and its principal collaborators were those of the central and eastern areas of the country. The peripheral areas were not nearly as well represented in the establishment, either because in the remoter areas the arms of the state and the social processes going with it were more tenuous, or because there was more deep-seated and continuing local resistance, or both'. In other words, the south was largely cut off from these processes, with the exception of the small government stations.

The Effect of the Two World Wars

One important development in the post war years was the anti-British demonstration and revolt in 1924 (El Mahdi, 1965: 137; Ruay, 1994: 59). This development forced British rulers to concentrate on measures designed to counter the trends that gave rise to the revolts. The British started to actively cultivate tribal collaborators and develop them into authorities in their own right. Indirect rule or native administration became the watchword of the state. The British assumed that the 'detribalized' elements who had been involved in the events of 1924 had to be discouraged and indeed negated by the pursuit of traditional societies. The British even considered to fully separating the south from the rest of Sudan.

Native administration in the south was taken seriously in order to create and institutionalize tribal divisions. For instance, on January 25, 1930, Sir Harold MacMichael, the Civil Secretary, declared that the southern policy '... is to build a series of self-contained racial or tribal units with structure and organization based to whatever extent the requirement of equity and good government permit, upon indigenous customs, traditional usage and beliefs' (cited in Ruay, 1994: 41). The other major objective of the 1930s British policy, as Daly (1988: 194) points out, was to insulate Southern Sudan from the destructive influence of the north, Arab, Muslim Sudan and to leave it to develop according to its own traditional systems, of which a few British officials would act as arbiters. Education was central to the British policy in southern Sudan. Mission education and the little government education that was encouraged, concentrated on basic literacy and some technical skills, and the replacement of the Arab and Islamic personnel was to be accomplished by a policy of tribal administration, emphasizing 'the cultivation of their languages, conservation and sublimation of all that is of value in their customs and institutions' (Woodward, 1990.: 48). In short, the interwar period (specifically the decade from 1924 on), saw coherent efforts by the British rulers to try to compartmentalize both Sudan and, as far as possible, the Nile Valley as a whole. However, the British policies and the efforts made to implement them were capable of being only partially achieved at most. The native administration in most areas failed to develop a significant

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25 According to Daly (1988: 194-195), when this policy was officially abandoned after World War II, this cheap policy had only widened the gap between north and south created a serious impediment to national unity and to the prosperity of the Sudan.
executive role and remained essentially confined to legal and financial activities. In particular, the failure to carry out economic change and the growing rivalry of major religious movements contributed to the failure of the British policy.

Another development that affected the British policies in Sudan was the invasion of Ethiopia by Fascist Italy in 1935/36. The Italian occupation of Ethiopia was seen as an immediate threat to the Nile valley. Italy by controlling Ethiopia controlled the source of the Blue Nile with its vital flood waters. The danger posed by Italy made possible the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936. Egypt recovered some of her rights in Sudan which she had lost in 1924 as the result of the disturbance of that year (El Mahdi, 1965: 138). As a result, once again Sudan was opened for Egyptians.

As it was suspected, in July 1940 Italy attacked Kassala and Gallabat, which are adjacent to Ethiopia. However, in January 1941 Kassala was liberated from the Italians. As soon as the threat of war passed by the end of 1942, Egypt showed an interest in reopening talks on the question of Sudan with Britain. Egyptian leaders started to condemn the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty as being signed under the threat of war and outdated once the conflict was over (Woodward, 1990: 63). In 1946 the Sidqi-Bevin Protocol was signed between the British Foreign Secretary, Bevin, and the Egyptian Prime Minister, Ismail Sidqi. The protocol contained a deeply ambiguous statement, on the one hand, it referred to the protocol as 'the framework for the unity between the Sudan and Egypt under the common crown of Egypt'; on the other hand, it also indicated the rights of the Sudanese to 'exercise the right to choose the future status of Sudan' (Quoted in Woodward, 1990: 64). Thus, the Egyptians claimed to have sovereignty over Sudan while the Sudanese rejected this claim and the protocol failed to solve the problem. In addition, the UN Security Council attempt to solve the problem and the subsequent Anglo-Egyptian talks all failed to come up with any meaningful solution.

It is also important to note that, in the 1940s different political groups including the Mahdist began to emerge. Some of these organizations went back to the pre-war period26. The British also encouraged various chiefs to establish the Socialist Republican Party (SRP) in 1950. This was mainly to test the relative influence of the religious movements in the countryside, especially the Umma Party (the People's Party) which was formed in February 1945 (El Mahdi, 1965: 141). However, the SRP became insignificant in comparison to the strong Umma and the Unionists. These political organizations were mainly active in the North. The South was not effectively involved in the development of political parties and it was isolated from the central political scene. However, on June 12-13, 1947, to incorporate the South into the proposed Legislative Assembly, a conference was held in Juba in which the southern representatives, northern politicians and senior British officers participated (Ruay, 1994: 51). In the conference it was agreed that the southerners should join the Assembly (Ibid.: 52). However, the only political party to emerge at all before 1950 was the Black Bloc of the ex-military and Islamic group, which cooperated with the Umma Party (Woodward, 1990: 73).27 The outcome of the Confer-

26 On the various organizations and their respective political goals see Woodward., 1990: 66-73.
27 Prior to the 1947 Conference constitutional and administrative changes were underway in Sudan. In September 1943 an Advisory Council for Northern Sudan was established by the British rule (Woodward, 1990: 73). As the name indicates it was only to give advice only on the North. Moreover, the Council (which ran for four years) was not successful not only
ence was the creation of a Legislative Assembly and Executive Council (El Mahdi, 1965: 144). In December 15, 1948, the Legislative Assembly was opened and the new Executive Council (with half British and half Sudanese members) was formed, controlled by British and the chiefs who collaborated with them (Ruay, 1994: 56). Later on, in 1951 Local Government Ordinance was formulated and implemented in order to replicate the British system and create a distinct second autonomous tier of government, local government, which would operate parallel to central government (Woodward, 1990: 76-77). The chiefs similarly dominated the local councils, which were established based on the Ordinance.

The Pattern of Decolonization

The change in the international politics, the emergence of different political parties, and the socio-economic changes (mainly in the north), especially after World War II all contributed to the pressure that pushed the British rulers towards rapid constitutional development. However, the end towards which Sudan was moving was still unclear, for the Sudan question had not been resolved between Britain and Egypt. It was the 1952 revolution in Egypt that influenced the final outcome. After the Egyptian monarch was overthrown and General Najib took power in 1952, Egypt supported Sudan's right of self-determination hoping that the Sudanese would opt for union with Egypt. Within weeks of the Egyptian coup the National Unionist Party (NUP) of Sudan was formed and the Umma Party also reached an agreement (known as the Political Parties Agreement) with the new Egyptian government (Ruay, 1994: 64; El Mahdi, 1965:146-147). On February 12, 1953, the condominium partners adopted the agreement as an Anglo-Egyptian Agreement (El Mahdi, 1965: 147; Ruay, 1994: 65).

In order to put into effect the Self-government Statute within the specified Anglo-Egyptian Agreement the first election was held on October 1953 (Ruay, 1994: 67-68). In this election NUP won 51 seats, Umma Party, Southern Party (hastily established in response to the omission of the south to participate in the Anglo-Egypt agreement), and Socialist Republican Party (RPS) won 23, 7, and 3 seats respectively (Woodward, 1990: 88, See also El Mahdi, 1965; 147). In other words, the victory went to the party committed to union with Egypt and produced a violent and bloody reaction from the Ansar on the day of the opening of the parliament on 1 March 1954 (El Mahdi, 1965: 148). When the parliament eventually opened and the leader of the NUP became Prime Minister it became clear that there would be problems in running a stable government. In addition to the rivalry within the parliament the rapid Sudanization process created another problem. Especially since academic qualifications were the main criteria for promotion, far fewer southerners were advanced than the region's size led them to expect. The exclusion of the southerners from senior administrative positions in the south left profound resentment among the tiny element of educated southerners. The exclusion had two more serious effects:

First, it turned the southern politicians against the administrators ..., which did little to help either party in the difficult task of a transfer of power in the region... Second, it turned southern politicians because of its limitations but because it was handicapped by the nature of the struggle over the state between British and Egypt as well as British officials and Sudanese (Ibid.: 75).
... against the government that had the Sudanisation proposal. From then on southern politicians sought links with government's opponents, including the Umma Party and even Egypt, which had a significant presence in the south in the form of officials from the Irrigation Department working on aspects of the Nile flow (Woodward, 1990: 89-90).

In short, self-government brought an immediate sense of unease, which soon turned into anger and finally a violent outburst. However, the government was able to gain control with the help of the British Air Force and leaders of the mutiny were tried and shot but left a bitter legacy. Some mutineers escaped to the bush from where they were later to emerge as part of a guerrilla force. The violence during the initial years of self-government in Sudan revealed the problems of running the new state, the weakness of control of society in the vast area of southern Sudan, and uncertainty over the future of the state itself.

Finally, Britain began encouraging the independence of Sudan to contain Egypt (Ibid.: 91). Thus, the seed of the idea of independence was planted in the Sudan government circles. Amidst much confusion on the working of Sudanese politics, the inevitable conclusion was reached on 1 January 1956, the day Sudan got her independence. However, it was clear that independent Sudan inherited a deep mutual suspicion and rivalry between north and south. The government officials to whom responsibility was handed over included no southern Sudanese, and therein lay the seeds of future catastrophes as the rush to independence quickened Sudanization (Daly 1988: 194). Thus, the contradiction between the centre, mainly the north and the periphery, the south, remained unsolved.

To sum up a number of points should be emphasized. First, present day Sudan was created first by the Ottoman Turks and then by the Mahdist rulers before the establishment of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium. This means that Islam dominated Sudan's political development under both the Ottoman Turk and the Mahdist rulers. The division between the Arab north and the rest of Sudan was created and remained unchanged. Second, the British under the condominium widened the division between the north and the south by institutionalizing tribal divisions. The British colonial rule failed to create a unified political community and corresponding political identity in Sudan. Rather, the British even considered creating a separate entity in southern Sudan. Third, even though colonial Sudan achieved better economic development than the rest of the region, it was mainly based on the production of a few cash crops to satisfy the metropitan demands. In addition, the economic development was mainly concentrated in the northern half of the territory. Fourth, the uneven development between northern and southern Sudan and the exclusion of the southern Sudanese people from having significant participation during and after the transfer of power resulted in violent conflict immediately before and after independence. It is, therefore, possible to trace back the causes of the currently ongoing war against the

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28 The worst was the mutiny of August 1955 by the units of the Equatoria Corps. Equatoria, especially the province with the most potential for unrest due to the greater development and consequent frustration it felt, turned on the northerners in its midst, and 260 officials, merchants, and members of their families were murdered (Woodward, 1990: 90, See also El Mahdi, 1965: 148-150).

29 The discussion on Sudan's economic and social development under colonialism was left out due to lack of space. Refer Woodward, 1990: 35, and 79-84 for a brief discussion.
central government, in addition to the pre-colonial period, to the colonial period and the pattern of decolonization of Sudan.

8.2.3. The Somali Partition

The Somali populated part of the Horn of Africa had been under the influence (sometimes direct control) of different external forces for a long time. The coastal areas especially had been under the control of Arabs and sultanates of Zanzibar (see the previous chapter). However, it was in the years following the middle of the nineteenth century, that this area was rapidly drawn into the theatre of colonial competition between Britain, France and Italy. By 1897 the partition of Somaliland was virtually completed (Ibrahim, 1985: 82). Though subsequent adjustment occurred, the frontiers of new Somali territories had been defined.

The British interest in the Somali area stems from its possession of Aden which had been acquired by forces in 1839 as a station on the short route to India. With its poverty in local resources, the Aden garrison was almost entirely dependent upon northern Somaliland for supplies of meat (Lewis, 1980: 40). Thus, initially the British government was only interested in Somaliland’s meat supply as a necessary ancillary to the garrison of Aden. This policy was later changed when events drove Britain to establish a Somaliland protectorate in 1887. The other power and Britain’s main rival, France, had more definite and direct imperial ambitions in the Red Sea coast. In 1859 the French consul agent at Aden obtained the concession of the Danakil portion of Obock. Three years later a treaty was signed by which France purchased the port from the Afar and the French flag was hoisted. By 1881, eleven years after the opening of the Suez Canal, the Franco-Ethiopian trading company was installed. Italy for its part had already started to look for a place on the Red Sea coast for settlement. In 1869 a former missionary in Ethiopia, Giuseppe Sapeto, obtained an interest in the port of Assab. In the following year, Assab was bought from the local Afar by an Italian shipping company (Ibid.: 40-41). However, it was only on July 5, 1882, with Law No. 857, that Assab became the first Italian political settlement (Tripodi, 1999: 17).

When the Egyptians withdrew from their occupation of the Red Sea coast, especially from the Somali coast, the British realized the need for direct action to ensure the safety of the trade routes and to safeguard the Aden garrison’s meat supplies. As a result, by the end of 1884 formal treaties, replacing the earlier Anglo-Somali trade Agreements, had been signed with various Somali clans (Lewis, 1980: 46). A supplementary treaty was also signed with each clan in 1886. Once these arrangements were completed the way for formal occupation was clear.

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30 On the Somali resistance against foreign invaders see Ibrahim, 1985: 82-86 and 596-600.
31 According to Tripodi (1999: 15) Assab was bought in the same year.
32 On the role of Egypt in this area see Lewis, 1980: 41-43.
33 The preamble to each clan treaty explained that its purpose was, for the Somali side: ‘for the maintenance of our independence, the preservation of order, and other good and sufficient reasons’ (Lewis, 1980: 46).
34 A clause which obliged each clan not to enter into relations with any foreign power except with the knowledge and consent of Britain had been included in the treaties (Lewis, 1980: 47).
The French also extended their presence following the Egyptian withdrawal. Early in 1885 the French asserted that their dominion extended beyond Tajura to close on Djibouti. The British replied with a counter notification of her Somaliland protectorate from Berbera to a point within the sphere claimed by French. By the end of 1885 Britain was preparing to resist an expected French landing at Zeila. Instead, however, both sides agreed to negotiate and in 1888 the Anglo-French agreement was signed, defining the boundaries of the two protectorates as between Zeila and Djibouti. Four years later the Djibouti port became the official capital of the French colony, which included the Somali population (Ibid.: 49).

Following the collapse of Zanzibar, Italy and Britain managed to control more territories on the shores of the Indian Ocean. In 1889, even though there was resistance against foreign invaders from the local Somali leaders (Ibrahim, 1985: 597). Italy signed an agreement with Yusuf Ali and Osman Mahmud and obtained the protectorate over Obbia and Mijertina (Tripodi, 1999: 26). Italy continued expanding southwards up to the Juba River and controlled the territory of Benadir with the main cities of Brava, Merca, and Mogadishu (Ibid.; Ibrahim, 1985: 82).

As was true in the case of Ethiopia, there was a conflict of interest between Italy and Britain with regard to the Somali territory. In order to solve this problem two Anglo-Italian protocols were signed in March 1891 and May 1894, which defined the boundary between East Africa and Italian Somaliland (Lewis, 1980: 55). In 1925 the territory under Italian control was considerably increased in size with the cession by Britain of Julaland (Tripodi, 1999: 36). The transfer and demarcation of the new frontier between Italian Somaliland and Kenya were made without consulting the people and with no consideration of clan distribution and grazing needs (Lewis, 1980: 98-99). In 1931 an agreement was signed between Italy and Britain demarcating the boundary between the two colonial territories (Ibid.: 107).

In another development, Emperor Menelik of Ethiopia dispatched a circular letter explaining his claims over the Somali clans. Menelik’s position created a conflict of interest with both British and Italians who were trying to divide the whole Somali territory among themselves. As a result, in 1897 Rennell Rodd, the First Secretary in the British Agency in Cairo, was instructed to go to Addis Ababa to settle these and other issues with Ethiopia (Ibid.: 56). At the end of the discussion a compromise was reached by which, while abandoning her claim to some 67,000 square miles of land in the Haud, Britain was able to retain Hargeisa and part of the hinterland within her protectorate (Ibid.: 59).36

With regard to the frontier between Italian Somaliland and Ethiopia, Italy was forced, after her defeat at Adwa in 1896, to reach a boundary settlement acceptable to Ethiopia. This was negotiated by Major Nerazzini, who had earlier conducted the negotiations for the Italo-Ethiopian peace treaty with Menelik. In the treaty ‘the Italian sphere was defined vaguely as lying

35 According to Lewis (1980: 51), in February 1889, a treaty was concluded between Vincenzo Filonardi, the Italian Consul at Zanzibar, and Yusuf ‘Ali, the Majerteen Sultan of Obbia, by which the latter placed his country and his possessions under the “protection and government” of Italy in return for an annuity of 1,800 tallers. Two months later, a similar convention was signed with Yusuf ‘Ali’s kinsman ‘Isman, the hereditary sultan of the Majerteen clan at Alula.
36 Another Anglo-Ethiopian agreement was also signed on 6 December 1907, fixing the frontier between Ethiopia and northeast Kenya (then still the British east African Protectorate) at Dolo on the Juba river (Lewis, 1980: 89).
within an area up to 180 miles from the coast and running from the boundary of the British protectorate to the Juba river, north of Bardera' (Ibid.: 62). This hasty division of spheres of interest created uncertainty and conflict which led to the Italo-Ethiopian war, and it is still unresolved. Another Italo-Ethiopian treaty was also signed in May 1908, which defined the frontier as running from Dolo on the Juba northwards to the Shebelle where it joined the line agreed to previously. The interesting thing in this agreement was that a nominal attempt was made to allocate different clans along the boundary to either Ethiopia or Italian Somaliland, with little regard for the grazing and watering needs of the people concerned who, of course, were never consulted (Ibid.: 89). How can nomad clans who are mobile all year round serve as a fixed boundary? That is why the 1908 treaty between Italy and Ethiopia became far more problematic. Since this treaty was signed, both parties had tried to occupy as much territory as possible. The Italians tried to win the Somali clans by capitalizing on the antagonism between the Christian Ethiopians and the Muslim Somalis, while Ethiopia used to depict Italians as ruthless alien usurpers. In addition, both gave arms and other types of supports to Somali clans to counter the expansion of the other. The most important piece of land was Walwal and its water well. In 1934 the attempt to control this piece of land resulted in military confrontation between Ethiopia and Italy.\(^37\)

In general, as a result of the treaties made by the different parties, without significant involvement and/or consultation of the Somali people,\(^{38}\) the division of the Somali territory among the French, the British, Italy and Ethiopia was completed. The Somali population, thus, was divided into French Somaliland (later Djibouti), Italian Somaliland and British Somaliland, and Britain incorporated some part of the Somali territory with her Kenya colony and another portion of Somali territory (Ogaden) became part of Ethiopia. In short, the whole map of the Somali territory was completely changed and new political structures constituted.

The impact of World War II, Independence and Unification

One of the many effects of the Second World War was to foster the nationalist aim of unifying the several Somali territories. In August 1940, in the course of the fighting in Africa the Italians captured British Somaliland and added that territory to the Somali portion of their East African empire. However, seven months later the protectorate was recovered, and the allied forces occupied Italian Somaliland and the Ogaden. As a result, with the exception of French Somaliland, all the Somali territories came under British rule for almost a decade. In other worlds, the map of the Somali territory changed again. The important point to be noted here is that the British after controlling all the Somali territories attempted to create greater Somalia, a policy which was proposed in 1946 by Ernest Bevin, the then British Foreign Secretary (Tripodi, 1999: 64). This was later advocated by the Somali Youth League and became the basis of Somalia's irredentism after independence.

Once the British administration controlled almost all the Somali territories it abolished the restrictions of the Italian regime on local political associations and clubs. Thus, in addition to the

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\(^{37}\) Italy finally used the Walwal incident as a pretext to occupy the whole of Ethiopia. In 1936 Italy occupied Ethiopia until it was once again defeated after five years.

\(^{38}\) It should be noted that Somali clan leaders were involved in some of the earlier agreements with colonial powers.
proliferation of Italian association, Somalis started to organize themselves. As a result, in 1943 the first and the most important Somali association, the Somali Youth Club, was established (Ibid.: 45). By the end of 1947 it changed its name to the Somali Youth League and was strongly organized as a political movement with branches throughout Somalia including Ogaden and Haud (which was and is part of Ethiopia), and even in Kenya. The league had a four-point program, the most important of which was ‘to unite all Somalis’ (Lewis, 1980: 123). In British Somaliland a similar organization, the Somali National League, which was established in 1935, emerged as a fully-fledged political party in 1951 (Ibrahim, 1985: 600).

In another development, a commission of the four powers was established in order to decide the future of Italian Somaliland, which was under British rule after the war. After the commission submitted its report, the four powers failed to reach an agreement. Then the issue was passed to the UN General assembly. On 21 November 1949, despite strong anti-Italian feeling, the Assembly decided to entrust Somalia for ten years to Italian administration under UN tutelage (Lewis, 1980: 128). As a result, Britain returned to her pre-war Somaliland protectorate in November 1948. In 1959, the British Colonial Secretary announced the intention of his government to facilitate negotiation for the union of the protectorate with the Italian Somaliland after each territory had become independent. In July of the same year, Abdiillahi Tse, the leader of the Somali government under Italian trusteeship which was formed in 1956, in explaining his government’s programme to the Somalia Assembly pointed out that ‘the Somali form a single race, practice the same religion and speak a single language. They inhabit a vast territory which, in its turn, constitutes a well-defined geographic unit. All must know that the government of Somalia will strive its utmost, with the legal and peaceful means which are its democratic prerogative to attain this end: the union of Somalis, until all Somalis from a single Greater Somalia’ (Ibid.: 161). In December of the same year the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution determining that Somalia’s trusteeship should be terminated on 1 July 1960. The British government also decided to hold a constitutional conference to discuss independence. The conference was held, and the British government decided to arrange for the protectorate to become independent by 1 July 1960. However, British Somaliland became independent on 26 June 1960. Five day later, on 1 July 1960, Somalia (Italian Somaliland) followed suit, and the two territories united and Somalia as an independent state was constituted.

It is worth mentioning that the administrative system of Italian Somaliland was the reflection of Italian fascism, bureaucratic and highly centralized, and directed by the governor and his immediate subordinates and secretaries at Mogadishu. In the districts and provinces, the Residents (equivalent to the English District Commissioners) were assisted by government stipended ‘chiefs’ and elders (Ibid.: 98). In British Somaliland, although there was no traditional system of indigenous chiefs and consequently no basis for a true system of indirect rule, titular clan leaders and the elders of lineages were in many cases officially recognized by the administration and granted small stipends. These leaders provided the link between the District Commissioner and the people. In addition, these leaders were granted limited judicial powers and thus furnished a rudimentary system of subordinate courts (Ibid.: 105). Thus, despite some

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39 In another development, on 23 September 1948 in accordance with the 1942 and 1944 Anglo-Ethiopia Agreements Britain transferred Ogaden to Ethiopia.
40 See Tripodi, 1999: 99-100, for the last preparation for Somalia independence and the role of Italy during that period.
concessions to the principle of indirect rule, in practice British Somaliland was governed as
directly as Italian Somaliland. All effective power remained with the District Commissioners.

It should also be mentioned that as a result of the different interests of the two colonial powers in
Somalia and their respective policies, Italian Somaliland was better off than the British
protectorate. Italy left more economic infrastructure than the British did.41 This difference and
the experience of different colonial policies created tension after independence and the unity of
the two Somalilands.

To sum up, it should be stressed that colonialism on the one hand divided the Somali population
into five different entities; on the other hand, it contributed to the creation of the present Somalia
by unifying Italian and British Somaliland. Before the current Somalia was created as the result
of the unification of the two Somalilands there was no unified Somali political community. The
recent attempt to create a separate independent state in northern Somalia, though not recognized
by the international community, clearly shows how difficult the integration of the two colonial
Somali entities was. It should also be emphasized that colonial powers, especially Britain, by
creating the idea of greater Somalia by bringing together all the five Somali entities had prepared
the ground for the post-colonial Somali irredentism. The attempt by the subsequent Somali
governments to realize the ambition of greater Somalia resulted in war with both Ethiopia and
Kenya and produced millions of refugees. Furthermore, the lack of a clearly demarcated
boundary (not to mention the artificial nature of the existing so-called boundaries), especially
between Ethiopia and Somalia, has been and would be a source of inter-state war between the
two countries. Finally, as Tripodi (1999: 49, and 72-74) argues with regard to Italian Somaliland,
it is important to point out that colonial officials did not have a clear understanding of the
complex Somali clan system and its political implications. As a result, they underestimated the
dangerous impact that the adoption of a Western political model could have on Somali society.
What happened at the end of 1980s is strong proof that the imposition of a centralized state
system based on the Italian or British experiences on the Somali society had been a disaster.

8.3 The Impact of Colonialism on the Horn of Africa

The impact of colonialism on Africa, in general, has been a controversial subject. For some its
impact was on balance either a blessing or at the worst not harmful for Africa. For others,
notably Africans, black and Marxist scholars, the beneficial effect of colonialism in Africa was
virtually none. For these scholars the positive effects were not deliberately calculated. They were
by and large, rather accidental by-products of activities or measures intended to promote the
interests of the colonizers. With this in mind, what I want to do is to briefly assess the overall
impact and significance of colonialism on the Horn of Africa.

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41 The discussion on the economic and social development of the Somalis under both British and Italian colonial rule
was left out due to lack of space. Refer Lewis, 1980: 92-104 for a brief discussion.
8.3.1 Political impact

To begin with, the following are believed to be positive consequences of colonialism: the establishment of a greater degree of continuous peace and stability following the consolidation of colonialism than before; the geo-political appearance of modern state replacing the mini-states; the introduction of a new judicial system and a new bureaucracy or civil service; and the birth not only of a new type of African nationalism, but also Pan-Africanism (Boahen, 1985: 784-786). First, it seems from the outset that colonialism brought peace and stability in Africa. In reality, however, Africans were suppressed and forced to accept everything. They had lost their right to govern themselves. In short, they were silenced by force. It was this silence that was taken as peace and stability.

Second, colonial powers reconstituted a new geo-political setup or colonial state. There is no doubt that many of the states that emerged were artificial creations. This artificiality has created a number of problems that are bound to bedevil the future development of the continent. To begin with, these artificial boundaries cut across pre-existing ethnic groups, states and kingdoms. One important consequence of this situation has been the border disputes that have plagued the relations between some independent African states - such as those between Sudan and Uganda, Somalia and Ethiopia, Kenya and Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, and more recently between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Second, because of the arbitrary nature of these boundaries, each African national state is made up of societies with different cultures, tradition of origin and language. The problem of nation-building posed by such a medley of peoples have not proved to be easily soluble. Third, many of the boundaries, though defined in treaties and delimited on maps, are not demarcated on the ground (Griffiths, 1996: 68). The boundary between Ethiopia and Somalia is one good example. Fourth, the creation of colonial states and rigid boundaries destroyed the pre-colonial trade routes. These long-distance trade routes had contributed to the emergence of complex political structures and socio-economic development. If these trade routes had not been destroyed, they would have contributed to the further political and socio-economic development of the region by creating some sort of regional economic integration.

The arbitrarily demarcated boundaries have been and still are sources of conflict in the Horn of Africa. To appreciate the role of boundaries in the politics of the region, it is necessary to broaden the conception of ‘boundary’, to encompass not only formal frontiers between states, but also the whole idea of territoriality, and the ways in which this is understood within the different cultures of the region. As Clapham (1996: 238) points out, ‘boundaries mean different things, because different societies are affected by them in different ways’. This can be illustrated by considering the different attitudes of the highland Ethiopia and the Somali society regarding boundaries. These competing conceptions of boundary and territory have been transformed into

42 In the Horn of Africa some of the major ethnic groups divided by colonial boundaries are: Djibouti-Ethiopia Afar and Issa; Djibouti-Somalia Issa; Egypt-Sudan Nubia, Ethiopia-Kenya Somali; Ethiopia-Somalia Somali; Ethiopia-Sudan Ben Amir, Annak, and Dinka, Kenya-Somalia Somali; Kenya-Sudan Turkana and Danyiro (Asiwaju, 1984: 257).

43 According to Clapham (1996:238-240) in the highland Ethiopia along with a powerful concept of boundary goes an equal powerful concept of territory. The Ethiopia state was a territorial state, defined by the area which it controlled, rather than an ethnic unit, defined by the people who belonged to it. Thus, the maintenance of the territorial boundary constituted a very substantial part of what being ‘Ethiopian’ was about. In contrast, the pastoralist Somalis share none of the highland attitude towards demarcating land. Different Somali clans certainly have broadly distinguishable territories,
the political arena and became the sources of repeated wars between Ethiopia and Somalia. In the more recent development, a small piece of land (though this was not the only bone of contention) became the source of the recent war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The leadership of the newly created independent Eritrean state is predominantly drawn from the same highland and Christian agricultural communities as the central Ethiopian regime, and shares its attitude towards the territorial state. That is why this piece of land became so important to the extent of going to war to control it.

In addition to the geo-political restructuring of Africa, colonial powers reconstituted states in Africa. In the words of Young (1994: 16): For most of this huge swath of territory - all of the Americas, most of Africa and the Middle East - political space was entirely redefined; in Asia some historically existing units were preserved, but even here profound structural and normative alterations in the state occurred, incorporating the European model. In states that escaped the imperial yoke, survival required a conscious state reconstruction largely based on European images and ideologies. Thus, both colonialism and resistance to it yielded diffusion of a notion of stateness whose lineage lay in the European core. The reconstitution of the European styled state had, at least, two long lasting effects. First, the indigenous political structures were distorted and or destroyed. As Mozaffar (1987: 16) points out, the indigenous structures were deployed to facilitate opportunities for exploitation. In the process, the colonial state distorted these traditional authority patterns and attendant social relations without totally eliminating them. As a result, the colonial state became a 'container state', to use Mozaffar's terms, in which were incorporated, often selectively, quite heterogeneous polities and social groups whose configuration and relations were affected in complex and uneven ways by colonial policies. Second, the European styled state played a dominant role and prevented the emergence of an alternative political structure, which could work in the unique African situation, even after colonialism was long gone. Although we commonly labelled the independent post-colonial states as 'new states', in reality they are successors to the colonial regime, inheriting its structures, its routines and practices. Among other things, as Young (Ibid.: 288) argues, 'building on the exclusionary principle of the colonial state, the integral state  sharpen s the line between state and society by proposing a comprehensive apparatus of domination. The subject is a passive citizen, whose civil obligations are enacted through public rituals of allegiance: support marches, applause for leaders, unanimous plebiscite votes for the ruler. Civil society is organized into party-structured ancillary organizations, which are mechanisms of surveillance and control rather than participation and voice.' Thus, If we look at the last two or more decades:

but these are overlapping zones without fixed borders, and the cycle of transhumance takes different peoples over them at different times. For many colonized African peoples, nationalism involved recognition of the common fate of those within a colonial created frontier, for the Somalis it directly resulted from the resentment of those who had to move across such a frontier.

44 See also Gifford and Louis (1988: XI) for similar arguments. Gifford and Louis (Ibid.: XIII) also explain that 'the Europeans who transferred authority hoped that the African elites, whom they have educated, would provide favorable opportunities for trade and commerce, defense arrangements, and, in short a continuation of the colonial relationship in all but name.'

45 By 'integral state' Young (1994: 288) refers to 'a design of perfected hegemony, whereby the state seeks to achieve unrestricted domination over civil society. Thus unfettered, the state is free to engage in rational pursuit of its design for the future and reward the ruling class amply for its governance. The integral state requires not only the autonomy from civil society achieved through comprehensive instruments of political control but also a suzerainty, if not monopoly, extending over social and economic vectors of accumulation.'
... the contradictory logic of the integral state and patrimonial ruler, superposed on the base of the autocratic heritage of the colonial state, had all but totally subverted the African polity. For civil society a deepening cynicism set in; the new state was but a derelict reproduction of the old one, unable to perform its functions with the same competence. The permeability of the state - through personal affinity or impersonal purchase of favor - in some ways softened its harshness but also rendered its behavior odious. Just as the colonial subject was a stigmatized other for the colonial state, so the independent state became a predatory other for the citizens' (Ibid.: 291).

Therefore, Young (Ibid.; 292) is right in concluding that '... the heart of the African state crisis of the 1980s lies in this lethal combination of the colonial state heritage, the failed vision of the integral state, and the prebendal realities of political management.'

Third, colonial powers established a new judicial system and new bureaucracy or civil service. In some cases, both the traditional and the new system were used under colonial administration. It is important to note here that, first, the newly created judicial system and civil service were not intended to serve an independent state and society. Rather they were intended to serve the colonial interest. Second, as discussed in this chapter, the indigenous people played only a subordinate role within the colonial judicial system and civil service. Real power had always been in the hands of the colonial officials. Thus, it was hardly possible for the indigenous people to acquire much needed experience in running an independent state.

Fourth, it is also true that modern nationalism and pan-Africanism were born during colonialism. However, the development of nationalism was an accidental by-product. It was not the result of a positive feeling of identity with or loyalty to the new nation-state. Rather it was a negative one generated by a sense of anger, frustration and humiliation caused by some of the oppressive, discriminatory and exploitative measures introduced by colonial rulers. That was why with the overthrow of colonialism the feeling lost its momentum. Thus, the problem has been how to replace this negative response with a positive and enduring feeling of nationalism (Boahen, 1985: 785-786). What this clearly indicates is that even those developments, which are taken to be positive outcomes of colonialism, are in reality the sources of the problems which post-colonial states encountered and which are not yet solved. The cases of Eritrea, Ogaden, Southern Sudan and the Northern Frontiers Province of Kenya are important evidence.

Passing onto the negative impact, the most serious of all was the loss of sovereignty and independence. 'It meant, above all', as Boahen (Ibid. 789), the loss of their right to control their destiny, plan their own development, manage their economy, determine their own strategies and priorities, borrow freely from the outside world at large the latest and most appropriate technology, and generally manage or even mismanage their own affairs and derive inspiration and a sense of fulfillment from their successes, and lessons and experiences from their failure. In short, colonialism deprived Africans of one of the most fundamental and inalienable rights of people, the right of liberty.

The weakening (or disruption) of the indigenous system of political structure or political organization, which was characterized as diversified, can also be considered as an important negative impact of colonialism. Colonialism maintained its rule long enough to weaken or to distort/destroy the African traditional system, but not long enough to replace it with a better system.
Another most difficult impact to get rid of is the mentality that it created among Africans that government and all public property belonged not to the people but rather to the rulers and could and should therefore be taken advantage of at the least opportunity. This mentality was the direct result of the remote and esoteric nature of the colonial administration and the elimination of an overwhelming majority of Africans, both educated and uneducated, from the decision-making process. This mentality is still with most Africans even after decades of independence and is part of the explanation for the reckless way in which government property is handled in many African countries (Ibid.: 788).

The establishment of a full-time or standing army as an effective machinery for the maintenance of political domination and exploitation is another impact which is often ignored. After the colonial rulers were overthrown, these armies were not reconstituted, but were taken over by the newly independent African rulers and turned out to be the most problematic of the products of colonialism, since these forces operated against the stability of the countries. Sometimes used by the new rulers or aspiring rulers they created problems as the result of their repeated and often unnecessary and unjustifiable intervention in the politics of African states.

8.3.2 Economic Impact

Though the political impact was important, equally or even more important was the impact in the economic field. The most obvious was the provision of an infrastructure of motor roads, railways, telegraph, the telephone and airports. The introduction of cash crops, exploitation of mineral wealth, commercialization of land, and the introduction of a money economy were also equally important and significant impacts of colonialism. It seems from the outset that these were positive contribution of colonialism. However, this should not be exaggerated for a number of reasons. Firstly, the infrastructure that was provided by colonialism was neither adequate nor as useful as it could have been. Most of the roads and railways were constructed not to open up the country but merely to connect the areas having mineral deposits and potential for the production of cash crops with the sea or to link internal areas of production to the world commodity market. It was meant to facilitate the exploitation of the resources of the colonies and link them with the metropolitan countries but not to promote the overall economic development of Africa nor to promote inter-African contacts (Ibid.: 791). This was true in both Sudan and, British and Italian Somalilands. In addition, as the first president of Togo, Sylvanus Olymio wrote, 'by breaking up Africa into economic and commercial compartments, the colonial powers did their greatest harm. The effect of their policy has been the economic isolation of peoples who live side by side, in some flagrant instances within few miles of each other, while directing the flow of resources to the metropolitan countries' (cited in Gifford and Louis, 1988: xxii).

Secondly, the 'economic growth' which occurred in the colonies was based on the natural resources of the area which means therefore that the areas not naturally endowed were totally neglected. This led to sharp economic differences within the same colony. These differences, in turn, accentuated and exacerbated regional differences and sentiments, which have been a great impediment in the way of nation-building (Boahen, 1985: 791). The Southern Sudan case can be one good example.
Thirdly, a typical feature of colonial economy was the total and deliberate neglect or discouragement of industrialization and the processing of locally produced raw materials and agricultural products in most of the colonies. All African states were, therefore, turned into markets for consumption of manufactured goods from the metropolitan countries and producers of raw materials for export. This provides the strongest justification for the view that the colonial period was the era of economic exploitation rather than development of Africa. One of the important effects of this neglect that, to an even greater extent than in the political field, few Africans were trained to take over from the Europeans. Industrialization was not only neglected but pre-colonial industries and crafts were almost destroyed.46

Fourthly, because no significant attempts were made to diversify the agricultural economy the production of single or at best two cash crops had become the rule. Hence, on the attainment of independence, most African states were dependent on mono-crop economies and were therefore highly sensitive to the prevailing international trade condition. Cotton in Sudan, banana in Somalia and coffee in Ethiopia are some examples. The heavy reliance on cash crops (export crops) had another disastrous effect, the neglect of the internal sector of the African economy. Africans were compelled to ignore the production of food for their own consumption in favour of the production of cash crops for export even when and where it was uneconomic to do so. Food therefore had to be imported and the ordinary people had to buy, usually at high prices, to feed themselves.

Fifthly, colonialism also virtually stopped inter-African trade. In pre-colonial Africa a great deal of trade went on between different communities and states and long-distance and caravan trading activities were a common feature of African economies. But after the establishment of colonialism such inter-African short- and long-distance trade was discouraged if not banned altogether, as the arbitrary political boundaries of each colony were generally taken to mean the limits of the economies. In addition, the flow of African trade from each colony was reoriented towards the metropolitan country. This prevented the strengthening of the old links and the development of new ones that could have proved beneficial to Africa. The same reason prevented Africa from developing direct trading links with other parts of the world such as India and China (Ibid.: 794-795). The disruption of the long distance trade of Sudan with western Ethiopia, and that of the trade routes between the highland Ethiopia and the lowland Somali society are two examples.

Thus, it can be concluded that the colonial period was a period of ruthless economic exploitation, and the destruction of the pre-colonial economic interdependence, rather than economic development. It was a period when the gradual development of African economy was distorted, to this many of the current economic problems of African can partially be attributed. In short, in the economic field the impact of colonialism is the bleakest of all.

46 Africa's pre-colonial industries produced all that Africa needed including building materials, soaps, breads, iron tools, pottery and above all cloth. Had these manufactures been encouraged and promoted through the modernization of productive techniques, Africa could not only have increased her output but could have steadily improved her technology. But these crafts and industries were all virtually killed as a result of the importation of cheap commodities produced on a mass basis into Africa (Boahen, 1985: 792).
8.3.3 Social and Cultural Impact

In the socio-cultural field, population increase, urbanization, and the emergence of educated elites and wage labour (proletariat) have been taken as somewhat positive impacts. However, if these impacts are seriously considered, it will be clear that they made no significant contribution to the betterment of African society at large. Moreover, even if they had some positive aspects they were unintended by-products of colonialism. Far more significant has been the negative impact. Let us consider only the major points. To start with, colonial education was grossly inadequate, unevenly distributed and badly oriented and therefore not as beneficial as it could have been for Africa. What should be emphasized here is that the curricula provided by all colonial educational institutions were determined by the colonial rulers and were closely modelled on, if not carbon copies of, those of the metropolitan countries and therefore irrelevant to the needs of the continent. As Sir Gordon Guggisberg, governor of the Gold coast testified in 1920 (quoted in Boahen, 1985: 800), one of the greatest mistakes of education in the past has been this, that it has taught the African to become a European instead of remaining African. This is entirely wrong and the government recognizes it. In future, our education will aim at making an African remain an African taking interest in his own country. However, there had not been and could not be any significant change to correct the mistake, for education is meant to serve the colonial political system. As a result, the impact of the wrongly oriented (from the side of African) education on African societies had been profound and almost permanent. Among others, as Boahen (Ibid.: 801) correctly puts it:

...the educated elite that was produced was by and large an alienated elite, an elite that adored European culture and civilization and looked down on African culture... Another gap thereby came to exist between this elite and the rest of the masses which has still not been bridged. Since the elite came to include the wealthiest people and since they came to occupy the highest posts available both during and after the colonial era they came to yield power and influence totally out of proportion to their number and the relations between them on the one hand and the traditional elite on the other became strained during the colonial days and have never really been healed ever since.

Furthermore, the distribution of educational facilities among the different regions/ethnic/tribal groups was uneven within each colony, which further accentuated differences and tensions between these groups. It also created ethnic/religious/regional hierarchies in which some group(s) became privileged at the expense of others. These have remained in many areas and underlie some of the civil wars and rivalries that have occurred in many independent African countries. Southern Sudan is once again a good example.

Even worse still was the impact of colonialism in the cultural field. As was declared at the Second Congress of Negro writers and Artist in Rome in March-April 1959 (quoted in Boahen, 1985: 801-802), 'among the sins of colonialism, one of the most pernicious because it was for a long time accepted by the west without discussion, was the concept of peoples without culture'. This is not surprising, for the fact that the European movement into Africa coincided with the nineteenth and twentieth-century peak of racism and cultural chauvinism in Europe itself. Throughout the colonial period, therefore, African art, music, dancing and even history were all not only ignored but even
positively discouraged or denied' (Ibid.: 804). It would be enough to quote what sir Reginal had to say to show how European saw Africans and their history:

the main body of the Africans, the Negro peoples who remained in their tropical homeland between the Sahara and the Limpopo, had ... no history. They had stayed, for untold centuries, sunk in barbarism. Such, it might almost seem, had been nature's decree... So they remained stagnant, neither going forward nor going back. Nowhere in the world, save perhaps in some miasmic swamps of South America or in some derelict pacific islands, was human life stagnant. The heart of Africa was scarcely beating (Quoted in Boahen, 1985: 804).

It was with such chauvinism and sometimes ignorance that Europeans legitimized their colonial domination as a civilizing mission. It is also important to note that such chauvinist and racist attitude towards the African people prevented the colonial powers from recognizing the capacity of the African people to govern themselves. It will not be surprising, thus, that the end of the colonial was not foreseen by the colonial officials before or even after the end of the Second World War. As Young (1994: 182-183) points out, only Britain contemplated even the distant eventuality of transfer of sovereignty. In 1938, in a major policy statement, Colonial Secretary Malcolm Macdonald had declared:

I think it is the gradual spread of freedom amongst all His Majesty's subjects in whatever part of the earth they live ... a slow ... evolutionary process ... There may even, sometimes, be inevitable setbacks. But over generations the evolutionary process goes on .... Even amongst the most backward races of Africa our main effort is to teach these people to stand always a little more securely on their own feet ... the trend is towards the ultimate establishment of the great commonwealth of free people and nations ... But it will be generations, perhaps even centuries, before that aim is accomplished in some cases. (Quoted in Young, 1994: 183)

In the French case, even the evolutionary process was excluded outside the ambiguous frontiers of an enlarged France. For instance, in 1944, when the colonial officials assembled at Brazzaville, Overseas Minister Rene Pleven made it clear that: 'In the great French empire there are neither people to be liberated nor racial discrimination to abolish. There are people who feel French, and to whom France wishes to give an ever greater part in the life and in the democratic institutions of the French community' (Quoted in Young, 1994: 183). For the other colonizers, the notion of transfer of sovereignty was even more remote. Only Italy was stripped of her colonial title as an immediate consequence of the Second World War, and even in this instance Rome managed to recover Somalia for a final decade of trusteeship.

Because colonial powers did not believe that Africans were ready to govern themselves they did not have plans to transfer power to Africans, as had been true of other colonies. There were no conscious initiatives to liquidate the European colonial empires. None of the colonial rulers of tropical Africa expected independence to be an early eventuality. Generally, as Davidson (1988: 508) nicely puts it: if there was no coherent or effective British plan to transfer power to
Africans, but opportunistic response to the pressure of African nationalism, still less was there any French plan.47

Last but not least, the creation and widening of the gap between the urban centres and rural areas was another impact of colonialism since the Europeans tended to live in the urban centres, all facilities that improved the quality of life were established only in those areas. The rural areas were therefore neglected, which in turn accentuated the drift from one to the other.

To sum up, the colonial period was an interlude of comparatively short duration. But it was an interlude that radically changed the direction and momentum of African history. It’s impact in the political and socio-economic fields were fundamental and lasting. Finally, the conclusion drawn by Boahen (Ibid.: 809) will be appropriate to sum up the place of colonialism in the long history of Africa.

... though there is no doubt that colonialism was a mere chapter in the numerous chapters of the long history of the continent, a mere episode of interlude in the many faceted and variegated experiences of the peoples of Africa, lasting as it did no more than eighty years anywhere, it is nonetheless an extremely important episode politically, economically and even socially. It marks a clear watershed in the history of Africa and the subsequent development of Africa, and therefore its history has been and will continue to be much influenced by the colonial impact on Africa, and destined to take a course different from what it would have taken had there not been any colonial interlude.

Therefore, what the leaders and the peoples of Africa should do is not to write off colonialism, but to deeply understand the impact of colonialism and to try to redress its shortcomings and failures.

47 See Young, 1994: 189-190 on the major international and domestic factors which contributed for the transfer of power in Africa.